

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-20 (Canceled).

21. (Currently Amended) An absorbent paper product comprising at least two superposed plies cut or precut into ~~of~~ a format with free edges, a peripheral zone along said edges, and a central zone enclosed by said peripheral zone, wherein said plies are joined together by marking patterns at ~~, composed of~~ compacted zones on one side of said plies without corresponding salients on an opposite side of said plies, without glue at least along a segment of said peripheral zone, and wherein at least one of said at least two superposed plies has an embossing pattern in said central zone and wherein the at least two plies have a thickness along said peripheral zone which is less than the thickness of said at least two plies in the central zone.

22. (Previously Presented) Product as claimed in claim 21, wherein each of the at least two plies has embossing patterns in the central zone thereof.

23. (Previously Presented) Product as claimed in claim 22, wherein the embossing patterns in the central zone are the same or different.

24. (Previously Presented) Product as claimed in claim 21, wherein narrowest parts of the embossing patterns point inwardly between said at least two plies.

25. (Previously Presented) Product as claimed in claim 21, wherein at least one of the at least two plies has marking patterns solely in the peripheral zone.

26. (Currently Amended) An absorbent paper product comprising at least two superposed plies of a format with edges, a peripheral zone along said edges, and a central zone enclosed by said peripheral zone, wherein said plies are joined together by marking patterns, composed of compacted zones on one side of said plies without corresponding salients on an opposite side of said plies, without glue at least along a segment of said peripheral zone, and wherein at least one of said at least two superposed plies has an embossing pattern in said central zone, wherein the at least two plies have a thickness along said peripheral zone which is less than the thickness of said at least two plies in the central zone, and ~~Product as claimed in claim 21,~~ wherein in said peripheral zone, at least one of the at least two plies has marking patterns at least partly the same as the embossing patterns.

27. (Currently Amended) Product as claimed in ~~claim 25~~ or claim 26, wherein the marking patterns constitute filigrees.

28. (Previously Presented) Product as claimed in claim 21, wherein the central zone includes filigree marking patterns.

5473/USSN 09/839,407
Group Art Unit 1772

29. (Previously Presented) Product as claimed in claim 21, wherein the at least two plies are joined to each other by embossing the central zone of each ply.

30. (Previously Presented) Product as claimed in claim 21, wherein the central zone of one ply has a decoration including embossed and unembossed portions.

31. (New) Product as claimed in claim 25, wherein the marking patterns constitute filigrees.